



Localism: a new framework for tenant complaints in social housing

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Housing
Ombudsman
Service



Localism Bill

[AS AMENDED IN COMMITTEE]

The Bill is divided into two volumes. Volume I contains the Clauses. Volume II contains the Schedules to the Bill.

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PART 1

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL POWERS OF AUTHORITIES

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- 5 Powers to make supplemental provision
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REPORT PROBLEM

**USE INTERNAL
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

CONTACT OMBUDSMAN
LGO or HOS

NOW

REPORT PROBLEM

COMPLETE INTERNAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

April

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

May

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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27	28	29	30	31		

June

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

8 WEEKS

APR 2013

REFERRAL TO SINGLE OMBUDSMAN



The new landscape...



Localism: government's actively-promoted shift in social housing regulation includes complaint-handling:

- Internal Complaints Procedure remains first-port-of-call – emphasis on improving case management, learning from outcomes
- Single Ombudsman for domain – enhanced power to enforce decisions in Court; possibly dealing with wider range of problems and complainants
- Continuing role of Ombudsman in support of effective dispute resolution, based on promoting key principles and behaviours
- But *designated persons* through the “democratic filter” to tackle performance issues and complaints from the bottom up
- Involvement of elected representatives and tenant panels but no legislative clarity for their roles or processes – other than to make or

The new landscape...



- Effective complaint management and complainant satisfaction will be more significant as key performance indicators, as the consumer-facing regulatory standards move to the backburner
- Increasing trend towards simplification of internal complaints procedures?
- No central focus for statistics, examples, or analyses: greater role of learning through benchmarking?
- Critical that landlords develop a strategic approach to managing stakeholder relations, particularly to ensure that:
 - Tenants are fully involved in the formulation of policies and procedures as well as their implementation, especially for complaint-handling
 - The designated persons in the democratic filter know about them and understand what they do
 - Staff is up-to-date with the relevant information, trained, and supported
 - Tenants are given simple, clear, relevant information about complaint escalation

The new landscape...



- How will **Landlords** and **Designated Persons** deal with...
 - In the case of a Panel, recognition by social landlord?
 - Consistency in approach?
 - Parallel complaints?
 - Resourcing? Administration?
 - Conflict of interest? (Register of interests?)
 - Confidentiality?
 - Data protection?
 - Freedom of Information requests?
 - Insurance? (Professional indemnity? Premises?)
 - *Serious Detriment?* – part of TSA consultation on new regulatory framework

- NTOs project (guidance and ‘accreditation’)



Don't panic!

The key date
is 1 April 2013

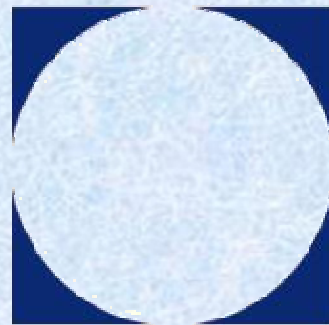
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*but the
clock is*



tickling



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